

Monday, June 3, 2013
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Audience goes gaga for Queen show

Picture courtesy of John Hall



Abbie Burke performs in the Priestley College production of the Queen musical We Will Rock You. See page 12 for more

Chris Jones interview



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Women's Leadership Network event



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inside...

FE loans in first month 'low'

Eleanor Radford

@EleanorRadford

The head of the Association of Colleges has expressed concern over "low levels" of applications for 24+ advanced learning loans.

Martin Doel, association chief executive, spoke out as the Student Loans Company (SLC) revealed 338 mature learners had applied for loans in the three weeks after the new payment's launch on April 8.

Just 75 learners were now 'ready for payment' for courses starting in August, each being granted an average of £2,950, according to figures released to *FE Week* under a Freedom of Information request.

The Skills Funding Agency allocated £232m in loans facilities to

nearly 800 training providers for the 2013/14 academic year. If learners were loaned an average of £3,000 each, according to *FE Week* calculations, the SLC could expect to fund just under 80,000 learners over a year.

But three weeks into the scheme just 68 men and 270 women had requested a loan.

Mr Doel said: "If low levels of applications become an ongoing trend, it may well reflect some of the significant challenges facing colleges in this first year of the new system."

He said deterrents included "aversion to debt" among mature students, and the "absence of a national marketing drive" for the loans.

The Department for Business,

Innovation and Skills (BIS) set up a £6.5m development fund to help providers with loans facilities to market the new loans.

But *FE Week* has learned that the association set up a survey on loan take-up and associated issues, such as bursary funds available under the scheme, after a number of principals contacted the group to "express concerns".

The SLC information further revealed that 198 of the 338 initial applications had been processed. Of these, the lender was waiting for final signatures from 116 applicants, while seven were ineligible.

Applications yet to be processed included 91 that were awaiting further information from the learner while 49 were "in progress".

It said 142 applicants were aged 24

to 30, 121 were aged 31 to 40, 55 were aged 41 to 50, while 13 were over 51. Seven did not declare their age.

Toni Pearce, president-elect of the National Union of Students, said: "The introduction of loans for learners looking for a second chance in education was damaging enough, but that it was done without proper consideration of the consequences or careful planning for its implementation is cause for real concern."

"There could be genuine reasons for the level of applications to be so low at this point, including students waiting for other exam results before applying."

Gordon Marsden, Shadow Skills Minister, said: "Ministers must watch enrolments and take-up data carefully to ensure that we do not see a lost generation of

adult learners."

A spokesperson for the Association of Employment and Learning Providers (AELP) said the group remained "concerned" about the impact of loans on apprenticeship starts.

It has sent its members a survey, commissioned by the Skills Funding Agency, to find out "how well prepared" the sector was for the introduction of loans.

A spokesperson for the agency said the results were not yet available.

A BIS spokesperson said: "The system is up and running as planned, and as this... information shows, more than 50 per cent of submitted applications have already been processed."

See editorial on page 4

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Edition 68

FE Week is the only newspaper dedicated to news, analysis, jobs and fun in the FE sector.

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Top Education and Training Foundation tweets:



@shanechowen
After all that, it's not even a Guild. Has anyone told John Hayes?



@App4England
AoC, AELP, HOLEX board made up of these org, maybe they should all just become one org (ETF)?



@drmattoleary
FE guild gets change of name even before its launch. Interesting that it's registered to AoC's London HQ!



@davidhNIACE
Pleased with positive response to new name Education & Training Foundation to lead professionalism. Launch still on track for next term



@callum_morton
After all the efforts to set up a 'FE Guild' 10 months ago, it's now changing it's name to 'Foundation' #NotThoughtThrough



@RebeccaPCET
Former 'FE Guild' now registered as new company under name: 'Education and Training Foundation'... How long will this one last we wonder?

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Strike threat looms as pay talks resume

Rebecca Cooney

@RebeccaKCooney

The prospect of industrial action looms over FE after the University and Colleges Union (UCU) backed a call to ballot for a national strike.

At their national conference on Wednesday, union members agreed to the ballot if upcoming pay talks fell through.

The motion described college employers as "making a historic bid to drive down the value of our pay and erode our terms and conditions of service".

It backed a strike ballot being held close to the beginning of October if pay talks scheduled for this month resulted in an unsatisfactory offer.

Talks ended in stalemate last month when the Association of Colleges (AoC), representing employers, withdrew an offer to support a 0.5 per cent pay rise after it was unanimously rejected by unions, who called for a 5 per cent increase.

The AoC said it would only return to the table if the unions, including the UCU as well as the Association of Managers in Education, the Association of Teachers and Lecturers, GMB, Unison and Unite, engaged in local discussions on conditions and pay.

Meanwhile, industrial action is already set for Thursday, June 6, after UCU members at Chesterfield College voted to strike over 70 proposed job cuts across management, teach-

ing and support positions.

This follows the voluntary redundancies of more than 100 staff in the past two years.

UCU regional official Anne O'Sullivan said: "Bringing the axe down on another 70 jobs now is a very dangerous move.

"Staff have done brilliantly to cope with the departure of their colleagues in recent times and should not be rewarded with further cuts.

"Strike action is always a last resort, but the staff have simply had enough."

She said that the union would not rule out further action unless the college removed the threat of compulsory redundancies.

Chesterfield principal Trevor Clay said: "The continuing decline in the number of 16 to 18 year olds within the county, the growth in the demand for apprenticeships, with reduced government funding, are fundamental factors reflecting the need for restructure.

"It is of course regrettable that unions are taking industrial action.

"In regard to our proposals, so far the only alternative that has been put forward by the teaching unions is to offer an increased redundancy package to those considering voluntary redundancy."

He said this was "highly unlikely" to achieve the needed staff reductions and was a cost that the college would struggle to find.

"As such, this would leave us in the same position we are in now," said Mr Clay.

"We remain open to all additional suggestions of how to address these changes to our funding."

AELP calls for 'rethink' on Richard's plans

Chris Henwood

@Chris_Henwood

The government has been urged to "rethink" any plans to overhaul the apprenticeship system in line with the recommendations of former Dragons' Den investor Doug Richard (pictured right).

The Association of Employment and Learning Providers (AELP) warned against the introduction of plans outlined in The Future of Apprenticeships in England: Next Steps from the Richard Review, published in March.

The plans were described by Business Secretary Vince Cable as "radically changing" the way apprenticeships were delivered, putting employers in the "driving seat".

More than 300 responses to the document had been received by officials at the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS) when consultation ended around two weeks ago.

AELP national policy manager Judy Brandon said in the association's response to the consultation: "We are ... so concerned by some of the suggestions outlined in this document that we feel compelled to urge the government to rethink before moving ahead.

"Having argued that apprenticeships are now hugely successful we are pleased that the government, in this latest consultation document,

recognises that there is much to be proud of ... it refers to 'over 200,000 employer workplaces participated and over half a million new apprenticeships started'.

"That being the case, we really do not understand why it is now proposing to introduce what they themselves go on to describe as 'a major programme of reform'.

"We believe that implementing all the proposals in this document would seriously threaten the continuing success of apprenticeships, which are rightly seen as the gold standard for work-based learning."

The three-month consultation — which closed on Wednesday, May 22 — outlined Richard's plans such as all apprenticeships targeted at skilled jobs, and new learning that would provide the foundations for a career and a springboard for progression.

It also suggested that training and accreditation of existing workers who were already fully competent should be delivered separately.

The consultation put forward 24 questions, including how to ensure that employers were better engaged with the development and oversight of the assessment in apprenticeships.

The consultation followed Mr Richard's review of the apprenticeship system, published in November. Its 10 recommendations included a redefinition of apprenticeships and a focus on proficiency in English and maths.

FE Week news in brief

EFA cash help

Colleges hit by changes to the Education Funding Agency's payment system for 16 to 19 short courses have won £20m of transitional protection.

A college losing between 3 and 9 per cent of agency funding will be assisted to bring the loss down 3 per cent. Greater losses will be reduced by two thirds. Assistance will be halved next year.

The move was welcomed by Gill Clipson, deputy chief executive at the Association of Colleges, who said colleges had "more breathing space".

FE Guild renamed

The FE Guild is to be renamed the Education and Training Foundation.

The body, created to provide training and set professional standards in FE, has been registered at Companies House under the new name.

Due to launch in August, it was incorporated on May 22 and registered to the Association of Colleges' London headquarters.

More than 60 per cent of respondents to a consultation this year said they didn't like the guild title.

Interest in college sale

Two open days held at K College attracted 69 organisations interested in taking on provision at the college, which is being broken up after a failed merger.

The Skills Funding Agency said the purpose of the open days on May 22 and 23 was to launch the prospectus. It added attendance was not a requirement of the procurement process.



However, he said that the "heart" of his proposals was a revamp of the way apprenticeships were paid for. Tax credits, or other forms of government incentives, should be dished out to employers as the government paid its part of apprentice training, he said.

Meanwhile, the Association of Colleges (AoC), in its response to the government consultation, proposed a "master" apprenticeship.

Skills policy manager Teresa Frith said: "All apprentices would 'pass' their apprenticeship and some may elect/be encouraged to take on an additional assignment that would seek to determine an element of 'mastery' over the 'competence' displayed within the apprenticeship."

A BIS spokesperson said the department was "delighted" with the responses to the consultation, including contributions from employers "of all sizes", private training providers, colleges, awarding organisations, professional and trade associations, and sector skills councils.

The government is due to publish its implementation plan for apprenticeships reform in the autumn.

Resignations 'won't hit' council work

Chris Henwood

@Chris_Henwood

The resignations of two members of the National Careers Council amid accusations that it was watering down recommendations to appease the government have been described as "regrettable".

Heather Jackson and Professor Tony Watts walked out around a month before its first report was due to be published.

However, council chair Dr Deirdre Hughes said their resignations would not hit the report's release or investigations.

"The resignations are regrettable, but will not affect the council's ongoing work and its report, which will be launched on June 5," she told *FE Week*.

The duo's damning resignation statement said the report — a draft of which was presented to Skills Minister Matthew Hancock last month — proposed a rebalancing of funding that allowed the Department for Education (DfE) "to escape its responsibilities".

They claimed the report suggested adult funding from the Department for Business,

Innovation and Skills (BIS), which they claim funded the National Careers Service (NCS) with £83m in contrast to £7m from the DfE, might be used to pay for young people's careers guidance.

They also criticised the report for failing to reference an Education Select Committee report critical of careers guidance services, and for not containing any proposal to boost "very limited marketing" of the NCS.

Their statement said these and other issues were left out to appease the government.

"We ultimately view this as a craven argument for a purportedly independent council to adopt," it said.

"We are also deeply concerned about the way in which the report has been produced.

"The 'rebalancing' proposal, for example, was never discussed in any meetings of the council, and only emerged in a draft circulated three days before it was due to be submitted to the minister."

Their statement added: "We asked for a postponement of the meeting with the minister, to enable the council to discuss the proposal in a considered way: this was refused. In our view, this is a totally inappropriate way for an inde-



Dr Deirdre Hughes, council chair



Professor Tony Watts and Heather Jackson have resigned



pendent council to operate."

The resignations were raised when Mr Hancock appeared before the Education Select Committee on May 16. Committee members questioned him about the duo's NCS funding concerns.

"Will the minister reassure us that the DfE is committed to supporting the work of the NCS properly? Will the DfE realise the opportunity that the NCS provides to ensure that we have an all-ages, competent, re-professionalised careers service?" said committee member Graham Stuart, Tory MP for Beverley and Holderness.

Mr Hancock said: "The funding issue has been raised many times. Times are, of course, tight for funding, but the central point is that

the legal duty to secure independent and impartial advice in schools needs to be delivered from the schools budget.

"Schools have a whole budget to deliver this, not just the £7m the DfE put into the NCS."

The council was set up by former Skills Minister John Hayes around a year ago to review careers policy at the Skills Funding Agency; the UK Commission for Employment and Skills; BIS; DfE; and the Department for Work and Pensions.

Members have since been involved in a number of investigations, including the Richard Review of Apprenticeships and Lord Heseltine's report on UK economic growth. They have also given evidence to the Education Select Committee.

Colleges ordered to improve

Rebecca Cooney

@RebeccaKCooney

Three colleges have been ordered to improve after falling below the Education Funding Agency's new minimum standards for key stage five.

In the 2011/12 academic year, South Thames College, Wiltshire College and Kingston Maurward College all failed to get at least 40 per cent of students to achieve an average point score per entry higher than 194 for academic qualifications or 172 for vocational qualifications.

According to the data released in May, 28 academies and 41 community or voluntary schools also fell short of the required standard.

A Department for Education (DfE) spokesperson said: "We have written to South Thames, Wiltshire and Kingston Maurward to make clear that we expect them to address the weaknesses that this measure has highlighted.

"In the event that these colleges are still below the standard next year, further action may be considered."

The DfE website indicates funding could be reduced or removed, new or alternative provision, such as academy conversion or open competition, considered – or possible closure.

The interim minimum standards were introduced in April to identify poor performance in all colleges and schools offering provision for 16 to 19-year-olds.

In the last academic year at South Thames

College, 38 per cent of eligible students (39 out of 102) did not achieve the minimum standard for academic qualifications.

A college spokesperson said: "At South Thames College, we take a long-term view of results and performance indicators.

"[We] recognise that our position in this table does not reflect the many talented and determined students we have.

"We shall continue to review and monitor performance tables and results and use them to inform our long-term plans."

She said these plans included the college continuing to make "significant investments" in its facilities, teaching and student welfare.

She also highlighted the college's 'good' Ofsted grading, which it maintained after it was inspected in 2012. That year's report included "positive remarks on the ongoing guidance and support of learners".

Thirty-two per cent of Wiltshire College's learners, seven out of 22, met the academic minimum standard while at Kingston Maurward, which failed to meet the vocational standard, 12 per cent of learners, 18 out of 153 of those eligible, achieved higher than the target figure.

No one from Wiltshire College or Kingston Maurward College was available for comment. The Education Funding Agency (EFA) said the interim standards were "the absolute minimum expected performance for all providers of 16 to 18 education or training".

"By establishing separate measures for performance in academic and vocational qualifications, comparing like with like, we are able to build a clear picture of how institutions are performing in different areas of their level three provision," it says on the EFA website.

The minimum average point scores are calculated by taking the average of the bottom 5 per cent of scores nationally or the fifth percentile.

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Editor's comment

Loan course data, please

Well done to the government and its partners for getting the FE loans application system up and running.

There has been much speculation about adults rushing to apply for the loans.

After all, the £280m funding pot for loans in 2013/14 is being dished out to applicants on a first-come first-served basis.

But it appears, thanks to our freedom of information (Fol) request, there has been no rush.

With about 800 providers with loan facilities, the 338 applications in the first 21 days since launch equates to an average of less than half an applicant each.

However, a slow start is perhaps not too alarming nor surprising given the lack of marketing and it being six months before relevant courses start.

What the sector should want to know in planning for 2013/14 is which courses are proving attractive to loan applicants.

Sadly, this information was not provided despite forming part of our Fol request. It was too personal, apparently.

All we can hope is that the Data Service will come the rescue of course planners when it publishes more data, albeit seven months away, in January. Fingers crossed.

Nick Linford, editor

Correction

When any newspaper says something is expected to happen "today" or "tomorrow" care should be taken that the date and event correspond.

Dailies, often written the day before publication nowadays, need to make sure their "tomorrow" doesn't really mean the day they're on newsagents' shelves.

Meanwhile, weeklies assume the reader knows their "today" refers to the publication date by the masthead or at the top of every page.

But what if there's a "today" in a publication with no such date?

Our recent Adult Learners' Week supplement wasn't dated in this way, yet had mentioned "today" in a story on page 15.

The event was an awards ceremony celebrating FE teachers. It took place on Monday, May 20.

Have you spotted something wrong with this edition of FE Week?

If so, feel free to tell us about it, including the page number and story headline, and explain what the problem is. Email us at news@feweek.co.uk with Corrections in the subject line.



Principals' fear 'lack of new talent'

Chris Henwood

@Chris_Henwood

Succession planning is a key leadership challenge with too few would-be college principals waiting in the wings, a new report has warned.

The Principals' Professional Council report, *Further Education Colleges: Rising to the leadership challenge*, pinpoints "a lack of new talent coming through".

The report, based on consultation with 130 principals at nine events in England this year and given to *FE Week* ahead of going live last week, said: "Succession planning and the need to encourage and develop the next generation of principals was raised at a majority of these events.

"Many colleagues identified concerns regarding a lack of new talent coming through as a challenge and felt something should be done to encourage more vice-principals and deputies to aspire to become principals."

Mike Hopkins, council chair and Middlesbrough College principal, said: "I have worked in and with the sector for some 32 years. When I began, typically a post would attract at least 50 candidates.

"Now, there, typically, will be between 10 and 15."

He added: "A lot has changed . . . and I'd say, for all the pressures, much for the better.

"It is tough, but it's perhaps, in part that toughness, which makes the job such a delight and challenge."

Nick Lewis, the council's general secretary and a former principal of 19 years at colleges in Nottingham, said a reduction in a principal's independence had helped to make the role less attractive, but the government's New Challenges, New Chances strategy — which prompted the research — would "reverse" the trend.

However, principals faced growing funding pressures, he said.

"The Coalition created New Challenges, New Chances, introduced new flexibilities and freedoms to colleges and has done a lot of work getting governors to recognise what they could be doing with those freedoms," said Mr Lewis.

"Our piece of work is complementary to that — to try to get principals to think more laterally and creatively in this new context.

"From our point of view — from a principal's point of view — what we see is that the Coalition's strategy is reversing a decade in which our colleges have been drowned in bureaucracy and central government direction. Principals were not only told what to do but also how to do it."

Their role — and the role of governors —

had diminished in the past 10 years, he said.

"We were directed by the government and its funding agencies," said Mr Lewis.

"The biggest challenge for principals is that they're being asked to become more innovative, creative and flexible, but that opportunity sits alongside fairly severe austerity.

"At a time when we want to become more innovative, and we're encouraged to become more innovative, we've never faced such severe reductions in funding.

"The demands of the day job to keep your college successful when you've got huge budget cuts and, at the same time, rise to the challenge of innovation is an awful lot of pressure on college principals."

The council's final report is due out in September after three further consultation events, the first of which was due to take place today at London's Kingsway Hall Hotel.

The second event is expected on July 1 and 2 at the Mottram Hotel, South Manchester, and the third on July 11 and 12 at Stratford-Upon-Avon's Arden Hotel. Places are limited. Visit www.ascl.org.uk/ppc for more details and to read the interim report under the Challenges for the Future section.

For more on Mr Hopkins's view on the challenges in attracting new principals, see page 6.

Comment

Report points at skills system's six 'key problems'

I am pleased that the Labour Party has placed what is referred to as the 'damaging divide between vocational and academic education' at the heart of its thinking.

The six key problem areas are spot on. Independent career advice ought to allow young people to have a firmer understanding of vocational as well as academic options. However there is little chance in the current economic climate to make the necessary investment so we have

to think of other ways to highlight various opportunities throughout and this should embrace social media.

Jane Scott Paul, chief executive, AAT

FE Guild renamed as a foundation

Meanwhile ... course closures, cuts in GLH, loss of additionality, redundancies, pay freezes, attacks on teachers contracts etc. Why are so-called sector 'leaders' so obsessed with this vanity project? Is it displacement?

John Germain

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FE Week profile

Chris Jones ~ his story

Eleanor Radford

@EleanorRadford

The City & Guilds chief executive talks to FE Week

After an hour with Chris Jones it's difficult to say I've discovered much that wasn't already known.

What the City & Guilds chief executive did give away was an enjoyment of mowing the lawn at the home he shares with wife Judy in the Oxfordshire village of Bampton. Oh, and he enjoys watching a bit of sport.

The question remains as to whether the 47-year-old has simply risen up through a number of positions to lead a global organisation while spending his free time walking his two retrievers, Bailey and Murphy.

But he's not being economical with the facts — he's just not into detail it seems.

"I'm not someone who over-intellectualises things," he says.

"I get up every day as if it was a new start. I come to work with as much enthusiasm today as I did when I first came to City & Guilds. I think I've been the same throughout my whole career."

But I do discover that although he sits at the top table of one of the world's largest awarding bodies, he's twice dropped out of completing his own qualifications.

The father-of-two, who grew up in a farming family in Alton, Hampshire, had already dropped out of an HND in agricultural marketing and admin before starting a communications, advertising and marketing foundation course in London when he was 20.

But travelling home on the tube one day, he spotted a job advert for a sales executive at the farming titles of publisher Morgan Grampian and thought "I can do that".

"I probably oversold myself in the interview," he says, "but I dropped my exams, got the job and haven't looked back since. Work presented me more interesting challenges than yet another exam."

"Life is quite simple for me. I wanted to go out and prove I could do well in the world of work — it's why I dropped out of college."

The business leader's no-nonsense and impulsive approach has directed his pathway throughout his career. He remembers when, in his late thirties and by this point working as European managing director for global publishing business Lexus Nexus [incorporated from Reed Elsevier], he was offered a job, mid-flight to Ohio.

"The chief executive waited for the plane to take off and said they wanted me as their US product development head ... and that they needed to know by the time the plane landed," says Jones.

"It was a big deal because I had to think of my wife and two children. We'd all have to move to the States."

But the businessman, who rose up the sales ranks at companies such as Midas Direct, Reed

Business Publishing and Financial Times Electronic Publishing, seized the opportunity.

"I went for it," he says. "It was a huge jump — the business in Europe was a £35m business with a couple of hundred staff, but when I moved to the States I had a budget responsibility of \$100m and 1,000 staff."

The four-year experience across the pond taught him not to "knock people down" if they'd succeeded, he says.

"I think sometimes in this country we're too quick to do that. What we sensed most when we looked back at the UK was that it was inward looking, critical of itself, and people of each other. Hard work and dedication should be applauded and I think opportunities are there for everyone," adds Jones.

"Being a good manager is about achieving with, and through, people — it's about creating an environment where they feel they can succeed."

"People need to feel challenged and rewarded, and that they're going to be supported in trying to do new and different things."

Jones worked in the States for two years "bringing the voice of the customer" to product designers at Lexus before asking to go back to running the business side of things, which he did for another two years, dealing with identity and credit authentication.

"Our business was in law enforcement and counter terrorism, using data to determine if people were who they said they were, for fraud purposes," he says.

"We were there through the 9/11 attacks and worked trying to help the government understand people's movements, which was fascinating."

But in 2004, he and Judy decided to return home to be with their parents and to ensure that their children could start their secondary education in the UK.

It was at this point Jones took his first job in education, as chief executive of Harcourt Education, part of school textbook publisher, Heinemann. After a few years the company was broken up and Jones left, joining City & Guilds in 2008.

He says the firm was "very specific" that it wanted someone with a strong commercial background, but that he spends a lot of time talking to learners and visiting customers internationally.

"The educational part has been the most rewarding part of my career to date. It's rewarding because of the opportunities you get to help people — whatever we do has a common thread, skilling people or skilling the



workforce," he says.

"There's a space for the forward-looking FE colleges to fill the space left by polytechnics; to be incredibly employer responsive with vocationally-driven programmes for learning that support progression, and deliver to the workplace highly skilled and talented individuals."

"I can see lots of opportunities to harness technology to support learning, whether that's using technology better to lower the overall cost of delivery, or to provide new ways to inspire learners to achieve more."

Vocational Moocs — massive online open courses — could be a part of that, he says, but they must deliver the high quality learning experience that industry will want from students.

Looking forward, he says that he's interested to see what Nigel Whitehead's review into adult vocational qualifications in England will unveil in September. The BAE Systems group managing director and member of the UK Commission for Employment and Skills, was asked to investigate by Skills Minister Matthew Hancock. He began work on his report in March.

Jones says: "There's a fundamental lack of structured work experience and work placement programmes built into the core school curriculum."

"I would want to see that happen more. I think that's one of the reasons university technical colleges, and career colleges, will succeed."

"We have to get employers more actively engaged in shaping and driving the curriculum — there's no point in an employer moaning about the output of the system if they're not prepared to shape what the curriculum should look like. We need to look hard at what would give employers incentives to create work placements, work experience or new jobs for young people."

He adds that City & Guilds is committed to supporting apprenticeships — evidenced by its Million Extra campaign, started three years ago "not only to promote City & Guilds programmes but also to support apprenticeships more generally".

As the media has made much of parents' negative perception of the vocational route, still preferring to push their offspring towards university, does he think an apprenticeship would be good enough for his own children? He says he hasn't driven his children in one direction or the other.

"My daughter Becky is very bright and did exceptionally well in GCSEs and would have been a classic four A-level student but she did a BTec in equine studies. Then she went on to do a degree in bio-veterinary science and she's decided that she wants to be a veterinary surgeon."

"The important thing for me was supporting them in the decisions they made," he says.

It's a personal thing

What's your favourite book? Exodus by Leon Uris	If you could invite anyone to a dinner party, living or dead, who would it be? Bruce Springsteen
What did you want to be when you were younger? A professional footballer	What would your super power be? To find a cure for cancer after losing my father to it
What do you do to switch off from work? Spend time with my wife, my kids and my dogs	

Time to climb aboard the internship



FE INSIDER | Ben Nicholls
@bnichollsuk

Former House of Commons Education Select Committee specialist Ben Nicholls is head of policy at London's Newham College. He writes exclusively for FE Week, every month

One of my most enjoyable meetings of the last fortnight was with a Labour MP — a major champion of FE — and his research assistant, currently on placement from university. We met to discuss an internship for young people interested in policy, research and public affairs careers.

I've been thinking about such a scheme for

some time. There's a general view that policy is an odd field consisting entirely of hard-nosed wannabe-MPs and geeky 'wonks' with umpteen doctoral degrees. The truth, however, is that careers in policy and research (and those pursuing them) can be fascinating and exciting, offering a chance to facilitate change in organisations and the policy-making process. But few people know where to start.

Couple this lack of understanding with the well-rehearsed problems of internships — lack of pay, poor management, menial tasks — and the concept of a new scheme emerged. The Policy Internship Programme (alternative names welcome...) will offer young people the chance to experience policy work from three different angles — Parliament, the front line, and a representative body — during a trio of fortnightly placements. The scheme will promise proper management, follow-up mentoring and guidance, and demanding work. We'll be advertising the first few placements soon.

So far, so good. But the meeting came during the same week that I was finishing, with colleagues at Newham, our response to the latest document in the Richard Review sequence. As a college, we support much of the proposed reform, although — doubtless like many across the FE sector — we have some concerns,

particularly around how new standards are developed, and ensuring that English and maths requirements are met.

But the juxtaposition of these two events offered scope for further reflection around careers guidance, and the ways into work on

“The real solution is for apprenticeships to be championed as much as universities”

offer to young people.

Too often internships are about who you know, while apprenticeships are still seen by many as a lesser alternative to university, despite recent evidence suggesting that those with higher apprenticeships go on to earn considerably more. Furthermore, we all know what the reason for this is — decades of bias. Consider the headlines when 10 Mossbourne Community Academy students from East London got into Oxbridge. Would the same story

have had such high billing if 10 students had won apprenticeships with international companies? I doubt it.

In rejecting the Education Select Committee's recommendation that face-to-face guidance be guaranteed for all, the government has demonstrated a lack of seriousness in ensuring all young people follow the path best for them. Too many young people continue to see university as the only real path to the best careers, while too many others are put off university for all sorts of reasons when it is the right answer for them. The same is, of course, true for apprenticeships.

New internship schemes alone will not solve the problems of young people finding suitable jobs, though they could offer a great opportunity for a few. The real solution, surely, is for apprenticeships, and other pathways, to be championed as much as universities — and for some successful people who began their careers without university to take the lead. The Richard Review heads in the right direction, but we all know how much more needs to be done.

Ben Nicholls

FE Week Experts



Ofsted, funding cuts, policy changes . . . it's no surprise that the number of prospective FE principals/chief executives is falling, says Mike Hopkins

A straw poll of principal and chief executive colleagues makes clear the reality of the decline in the number of prospective principals. Why has this happened?

Broadly speaking, issues include Ofsted and the price that has to be paid for failure;

Why are so few applying for principalship?

the resulting caution of vice-principals and other senior managers; the complexity of combining the senior academic role of principal and the business orientated one of chief executive.

Then there's the loss of autonomy as a result of FE finding itself at the heart of education politics; caution about recruiting from outside the sector; and the pressures of dealing with reduced funding.

The respondents to my straw poll saw Ofsted as an 'adversarial' organisation. One described the principal as having the job security of a Premier League football manager without the rewards. Officially outstanding colleges could become officially failing ones at the change of a common inspection framework.

One respondent questioned why a person would apply to a college that 'requires improvement'. Sustainable improvement could take two to three years with a reinspection in significantly less time than that.

Similarly, why would a person apply to an 'outstanding' college with the risk of an inferior grade awarded at the next inspection (which could be triggered by his or her arrival) and the governors seeking an immediate scapegoat?

Many respondents referred to their perceived loss of autonomy as FE became one of the key battlegrounds of education party politics.

Despite New Challenges, New Chances,

many felt that the focus on data, year-on-year cuts in funding, and frequent and often contradictory shifts in policy had all impaired any autonomy to make decisions.

“One respondent described the principal as having the job security of a Premier League football manager without the rewards”

Some lamented the absence of investment in a national training school and credible training for the principal/chief executive role. Others noted that most colleges still appointed from a field 'limited' to people who had risen to management via teaching.

The focus on 'teaching' could be overdone, they said, leading to a 'bigotry' around appointing from outside the sector.

Finally, it was also noted that senior leaders at vice-principal level were also focused on teaching and learning and therefore did not get the chance to develop the other skills

required of the chief executive - for example, business acumen.

The role of principal had become far more complex since Incorporation. Having credibility in the teaching workforce combined with academic improvement, while also driving a multi-million business forward, required a broad set of skills.

When I began my career 32 years ago, my first principal would arrive into college at 8.45am precisely, with The Times folded neatly under his arm and sporting a yellow rose on his elegant Prince of Wales check suit. Generally, he wouldn't be seen throughout the day until he left for home at 5pm.

A lot has changed since those long lost days and, despite all the pressures, much for the better.

It is tough, but it's perhaps, in part, that toughness that makes the job such a delight and challenge.

But more than that, how many jobs can have such value-driven ethics at their heart?

Being an FE principal or chief executive is about being socially conscious, seeking economic and social equality and being at the heart of the skills chain.

It is at the heart of progressive politics, and I'd encourage anyone who is interested in that, to put themselves forward.

Mike Hopkins, chair of the Professional Principals' Council and principal of Middlesbrough College

FE Week Experts

Cracking the glass ceiling

FE can show the private sector a thing or two when it comes to the representation of women in top jobs, says Sally Dicketts

The media has been paying a lot of attention to the representation of women — or lack of it — in top roles in FTSE 100 and 250 companies. It's not particularly good news.

Dame Marjorie Scardino, the former chief executive of Pearson, lamented the dearth of female chief executives in the FTSE 100, and when she and Kate Swann (WH Smith), resigned in 2012, it halved the number of women running such companies. The Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS) is taking the issue seriously, with Business Secretary Vince Cable recently acknowledging the "chronic shortage of women in top jobs".

Not so in the FE and skills sector. At the Women's Leadership Network's (WLN) conference on May 22, Skills Minister Matthew Hancock paid tribute to the sector's success in raising the number of female college principals and chief executives. Each year WLN collects data on all colleges — general FE, sixth-form colleges and specialist institutions — and with five years' data, has enough

evidence to talk about trends.

Since 2009, the proportion of women in the lead role has risen from 36 to 41 per cent, up from 130 to 139, despite a decline in the number of colleges.

It is hard to say exactly what is making a difference, but a possible factor is the small but important number of role models emerging of women working at senior levels in science and technology, for example, stimulates and inspires talent.

The government's focus on women as leaders highlights the issue. While policy changes and targets are not necessarily the best ways to help crack the glass ceiling, demonstrating good practice and promoting women to influential roles in the corporate sector, on boards and in the government itself, would be inspiring and a powerful indicator of change.

Barriers are slowly disappearing and support for female leaders developing. We're aware of more male principals — and females — taking seriously the development of their talented female staff. Some, including Mike Hopkins at Middlesbrough College, Richard Atkins at Exeter College, Jat Sharma at Walsall College and Phil Davies at City College Plymouth, have pinned their colours firmly

to the mast, and many others are overtly supporting women's career development.

Sector institutions such as the Network for Black Professionals and the Learning and Skills Improvement Service have also had a significant influence on equality, clearing pathways for personal and career advancement.

I haven't mentioned specific influential women, though they are legion, working in the background, spotting talent, finding development opportunities and encouraging women to take their futures into their own hands. WLN membership is up by a third since October 2011 and increasingly high attendances at network events, especially the annual conference, suggest that colleges are willing to invest in staff keen to benefit from these opportunities. There is a continuing demand for WLN's career and leadership development services, and the speed-coaching sessions at this year's conference were, once again, oversubscribed.

There's still a way to go to engage all elements of the sector and some work to do on the gender balance in governance. The BIS advisory group on governance has this issue in its sights and it would be good to see specif-



ic recommendations to improve the recruitment of female board members and chairs. There have always been huge numbers of talented women and at last they are pulling themselves through to the top jobs. FE can show the private sector a thing or two.

Sally Dicketts, chair of WLN and principal of Oxford and Cherwell Valley College

See page 9 for WLN conference report

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FE Week Events

Giving every woman the chance to reach her potential

Women dominate the FE workforce, but only 41 per cent of principals are women – and even fewer chair governing bodies. The Women's Leadership Network is determined this will change, as Eleanor Radford reports

How more women can make it to the top in FE topped the agenda at a recent Women's Leadership Network (WLN) conference in London.

Navy commander Polly Hatchard, entrepreneur Julie Meyer, and East Berkshire College principal Kate Webb told the more than 100 delegates the stories of their careers, while encouraging women to break through the glass ceiling in a profession in which they outnumber their male counterparts - except as principals and chairs.

A WLN report, *Narrowing the Gap*, was also launched at the Hallam Conference Centre event.

Skills Minister Matthew Hancock welcomed the research, which maps the steady increase of women principals over the past five years.

"FE has something to teach the rest of the economy," he said.

"In FE there is a workforce that's predominantly female – around two thirds – but just 41 per cent of college principals are women, and female chairs are less than a quarter. The system has a lot of advantages over the rest of the economy, but still has some way to go."

He said the "best" boards and groups of problem-solvers were "normally the most diverse".

"Evidence shows that diversity adds value to decisions. There is no greater determinant to the way we behave as individuals as our genders, but we too realise that there are fewer women in ministerial positions than there ought to be."

He said flexible parental leave shared by men and women needed to become the "cultural norm" as it had less impact on a woman's career.

"If it becomes normal that both take time off, that will go some way to changing the culture."

He said the government would add the

network's research to the ongoing Review of Governance in FE, due next month. This would help "make sure the award for opportunity was equal" and that "progression for all" was available.

"As a result of this we will make sure we have more women in senior posts in FE. I'm committed to your goals, giving every woman the chance to reach her potential," he added.

"Together, we can get there."

Sally Dicketts, the network's chair and principal of Oxford and Cherwell Valley College, announced that Marie-Thérèse McGivern, principal of Belfast Metropolitan College, as the winner of this year's Inspiring Leader Award. She was presented a glass trophy by Professor Daniel Khan, chief executive of OCN London, which sponsored the award.

Mrs Dicketts said: "Since her appointment . . . Marie-Thérèse has provided inspirational leadership, steering the college through a turbulent period, leading significant change and successfully implementing a three-year improvement plan that involved major organisational restructuring, extensive change and progress in the college's performance."

"Those who work with Marie-Thérèse say that her ability to galvanise support . . . has been critical. I believe she is an authentic leader and a very deserving winner of this year's award."

Ms McGivern said: "I have always been passionate about gender equality, and have benefited from positive role models and mentors over the course of my career. Awards such as this from the WLN raise awareness of the need to encourage more women into leadership roles and, once there, the need to inspire and motivate other women to join them."



Picture courtesy of Womens' Leadership Network

Skills Minister Matthew Hancock addresses delegates



Entrepreneur Juli Meyer



Naval commander Polly Hatchard



Professor Daniel Khan presents Marie-Thérèse McGivern with her award



Henriette Harnisch of Walsall College leads a workshop



Network Chair Sally Dicketts

FE Week Events

Ceremony marks the 'wonderful things' that tutors do

Adult Learners' Week winners recently got together in London to thank their tutors. Rebecca Cooney was there

The dedication of FE tutors was honoured as part of Adult Learners' Week (ALW) with a special celebration ceremony in central London.

David Hughes, the chief executive of the National Institute for Adult Continuing Education, said the event on May 20 – the first of its kind – had been prompted by ALW award winners.

Every one had talked about their tutors, he said. "That sense that someone has actually invested in you and believes in you, which gives you the confidence to go on... it comes through time and time again.

"So I think it's really fitting that we're here to do something slightly different to traditional Adult Learners' Week... to celebrate and recognise [tutors]."

ALW winners from previous years told the audience at the event, organised by NIACE and the Institute for Learning (IfL), how their tutors had inspired them.

Cheryl Powell, a former drug addict who won 2012 outstanding learner for the South West, praised her tutor Steve Murphy, who fought to secure her funding on The Prince's Trust team skills course.

"Steve took the time to listen to me and understand what I needed, and he did all of this without even knowing he could get me on the course," she said.

"For him to do that, and to believe in me, was a wonderful feeling and made me want to push more."

Cheryl now works alongside Steve as a manager and trainer at the trust.

Steve said: "I saw Cheryl and thought, if we don't intervene, who else is going to do it? I knew we could really make a difference."

Lorraine Pearson, the 2011 London out-



Steve Murphy and Cheryl Powell with NIACE chief executive David Hughes

standing learner award winner, said that Sally Burrridge and Daphne Carnegie, her tutors at City and Islington College, had made a difference in the early stages of her return to learning as an adult.

"I felt I didn't belong there until Sally made me feel that I did," she said.

Lorraine initially enrolled on a forensics course, followed by a psychology and social anthropology course, before taking up ceramics as a way of relaxing.

Inspired by her tutors, she has bought a kiln to set up a social enterprise.

"I want to do work in the community, encouraging people who are like I was to... follow in my footsteps," Lorraine said.

Army chef Herbert Goredema, who won the foundation degree award in 2010, also plans to start up a business after studying long distance with Westminster Kingsway College.

He is now facing redundancy and hopes to

use his pay-off to start a contract catering business.

"My tutor Clare Mannall and her team spent a long time building up my confidence, from the foundation degree right up to my masters," he said.

Outstanding learner of the year 2009, Frank Harris, who began training as a counsellor after spending years moving between prison, homelessness and addiction, struggled to find the right words to express his gratitude to his tutor Lucy Robson.

"I've never had a chance to thank Lucy for seeing a little bit of a light in me and encouraging me," he said.

"My life's been transformed because of Lucy. I can be a proper grandfather and a father and a brother now — Lucy, I'm really honoured to know you."

Lucy echoed the humility of many of the tutors at the event. "We just met Frank at the right moment," she said.

"I think teachers are modest because it's so enjoyable. We don't want to take credit for such a nice job where you get to meet such great people."

In her inaugural speech as patron of the IfL, Baroness Helena Kennedy told the ceremony: "What [tutors] are all doing is transforming lives, and it's truly inspirational.

"Teachers are really doing wonderful things across our society, giving people second chances, helping them to develop themselves."



Baroness Helena Kennedy



Army Chief Herbert Goredema talks to David Hughes

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An ace for Birmingham's bull



From left: Leigh-Anne Rogers, fashion tutors Jessica Lench and Eileen Simons, Natalie Segelov and Minna Watson

Young designers from Birmingham gave the city centre's iconic bull statue a tennis makeover in time for the Aegon Classic women's tennis tournament due to be held in the city just before Wimbledon.

South and City College Birmingham HND fashion students Leigh-Anne Rogers, 25, Natalie Segelov, 18, and Minna Watson, 22, spent three weeks creating an outfit of t-shirt, shorts, sweatband and tennis racket.

Eileen Simons, assistant director of fashion at South & City College Birmingham,

said: "The project has been a tremendous challenge for our students and is a great achievement, broadening and diversifying their skills and knowledge of the eclectic nature of the industry; one day a catwalk and the next day a bull."

All the fabric for the project was sourced from Birmingham's Rag Market.

Tim Walley, general manager at the Bullring shopping centre, said: "I've no doubt that this new outfit is sure to be a hit with our customers."

Hitting the high notes in Wiltshire



Wiltshire College lecturer Patrick Williams (bottom right corner) in the video with the other members of the Cantores Connexi online choir

Students from the South West helped their lecturer to strike a chord in an innovative musical video project.

Wiltshire College lecturer Patrick Williams was one of 20 people from around the world to sing in a virtual choir via Skype.

Their performance of Eric Whitacre's Seal Lullaby was produced and edited by creative digital media students Shannon Mayo, Matt Gray, Henry Ahtom and Charlotte Hide, all aged 20.

Charlotte said: "It has been so interesting

connecting people across the world through music and has expanded our knowledge and skills."

The choir was formed by Eric Whitacre, a Grammy-winning composer, to sing live via Skype with an on-stage choir at the Technology, Education and Design (TED) conference in March.

The choir member were inspired to form their own group, Cantores Connexi.

Patrick said: "The whole experience has been wonderful."



Jack Ashworth has been signed to Rugby Super League outfit St Helen's

Sports student in a league of his own

A Rochdale sports student is in rugby heaven after signing a professional contract with St Helen's Rugby League Football Club — nicknamed the Saints.

Jack Ashworth, 17, is in his second year of a BTec diploma in sport, at Hopwood Hall's rugby academy, which allows him to split his time between training and studying.

Jack said: "I have really enjoyed my time at Hopwood Hall ... It has been hard work

but I knew it would be worth it in the end.

"Now that I have earned my first pro contract, my next goal is to get a super league squad number with the first team."

Jack's college tutor, Matt Calland, recommended him to the Saints' development staff.

He said: "If Jack keeps up the hard work I think he could develop into a full-time Super League player."



From left: boxing coach Ian Bailey, students Shahid Hussain, Muzammil Adam, both 16, Karol Zielinski, 19, and Ihsan Kahn, 16, with boxing legend Barry McGuigan at the new £5m Sports Centre at East Berkshire College

Boxing champ steps into the ring

Former world champion boxer Barry McGuigan has opened a new £5m college sports centre in Berkshire.

The boxing legend joined East Berkshire College principal Katie Webb and chair of governors Tony Dixon at the opening ceremony, and later made time to sign autographs, answer questions and give advice to young boxers.

He said: "The college is doing some great work here and the new facilities will

enable more young people in this area to get involved in sports like boxing."

Visitors to the opening had the chance to watch and to take part in a variety of activities that showcased the centre's facilities, including five-a-side football, a street-dance class and a series of boxing demonstrations.

Sports students on the college's coaching course also ran a football skills session for schoolchildren.

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'I did a little jump for joy'

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ROUND-UP

Vanessa Ward tells Rebecca Cooney why achieving a place to study midwifery is the stuff of dreams

A Middlesbrough College student who was saved by the skills of midwives is set to become a midwife herself.

Level three BTec in healthcare student Vanessa Ward, 18, was one of 50 from around 1,000 applicants to be offered a place at Leeds University to study midwifery.

Vanessa, from Linthorpe, has wanted to be a midwife since she was 13, when her mother Carole told her about her own traumatic delivery; Vanessa was born blue and was whisked away to be resuscitated. She then suffered a fit that doctors were worried would cause brain damage.

"I was about three hours old before my mum actually got a chance to hold me — she didn't even know if she'd had a boy or a girl," said Vanessa.

"It was quite scary for my mum. She was very grateful to the midwives and she's passed that on to me."

Vanessa has worked hard to achieve her dream, completing a part-time 'steps into healthcare' apprenticeship alongside her GCSEs when she was still at school.

At college, she completed a range of placements including working with youngsters with disabilities, joining

community nurses on their rounds and caring for the elderly in residential homes.

Vanessa, who also volunteers with the Teenage Cancer Trust and St John Ambulance, believes these placements and experiences helped her application to Leeds, but admits that she was still surprised when she got the news.

"I'd been unsuccessful at four other universities, so I was a bit apprehensive. It took me quite a while to open the UCAS application," she said.

"I actually did a little jump for joy when I read it because I was on my own. Then I rang my mum and she was screaming down the phone.

"I'm looking forward to moving to a new city . . . it'll be a big change."

She thinks that the favourite part of midwifery will be parents' reactions when their child is born. "They'll have been waiting for it for nine months and then they'll have the relief and joy of that moment," said Vanessa.

Her personal tutor at the college, Laura Birch, described Vanessa as a "very ambitious student" who was on target to achieve three distinction stars when she completes her course this year.

"We're so proud of her," she added.

Vanessa said: "I can't thank the tutors at Middlesbrough College enough for their help and support. I've worked hard for this and it's thanks to the quality of the course and the great placements I've had that have allowed me to follow my dreams."



Vanessa Ward is set to fulfil her dream of becoming a midwife. Inset: Vanessa as a baby, when the skill of midwives saved her life

Close encounters of an exotic kind at Canterbury College

A group of Kent pupils came face-to-face with reptiles, exotic birds and insects during a college tour to check out their post-GCSE options.

Canterbury College welcomed 50 Year 10 youngsters from Charles Dickens School, Broadstairs, and treated them to taster lessons in animal care, hairdressing, beauty therapy, engineering and A-level subjects.

Pupils fed the college meerkats and came face-to-face with reptiles, exotic birds and insects during a tour of its animal care department.

The school's careers and work coordinator, Teresa Schers, said: "It's really good for them to see alternative post-16 options. They experience what kind of things are out there."

Mel Francis-Jones, the college's progression and project officer, said: "It was a lively, exciting event that offered pupils a taste of the wide breadth of subjects we offer."



Year 10 pupils from Charles Dickens School, Broadstairs, East Kent, feed Canterbury College meerkats



Amber Cameron, 15, tries her hand at hairdressing



Bradley Welsh, Archie Hilton and Mitchell Laing, all 15, learn about structural properties

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Hairdressing, construction and A-level learners ready to renovate the cricket club

Brush strokes in Ebbw Vale

Hairdressing students in Wales have swapped brushes in a bid to renovate a cricket club's grounds.

More than 130 hairdressing, construction and A-level students from Coleg Gwent spent two months painting, sweeping, clearing and planting shrubs at the Ebbw Vale Cricket Club.

Coleg Gwent lecturer Tracey Waterhouse said: "We're proud of their efforts in achieving a clean and friendly environment that has ended in a real community spirit."

The learners also raised money to provide six picnic benches.

Nick Pepper, secretary of the cricket club, said: "It's great to see young students getting involved with a local club, helping it to receive the makeover that it thoroughly deserves."

The materials and paint were supplied by Alun Watkins, operations manager at Blaenau Gwent County Council, and the plants were donated by Ebbw Vale B&Q and Price's shop in Beaufort.

Rocking out at Priestley College



From left: Emily Knight, Tom Sentia and Daniella Everett, all aged 17 or 18

Picture courtesy of John Hall

Cheshire performing arts students sold out a recent production of *We Will Rock You*, the musical based on songs by Queen.

The show, which ran over three nights and sold nearly 400 tickets, featured more than 60 Priestley College BTec students in onstage, offstage and design roles.

"The hardest part is living up to Queen and the audience's expectations of how their songs should be performed. But our students

rose to the occasion," said tutor Abbie Rippon.

"They created a real rock concert atmosphere by taking the performance out amongst the audience."

The show took four months of preparation. "It was a great team effort and really was a memorable show," said Abbie. "The students enjoyed it and the audience's response was amazing."

Science students scoop up awards



The science of winning: Ben Ryan, Helen Robertson, both 17, James Fryatt, Hannah Holmes and Jessica Holmes, all 18

Young biology and chemistry boffins from Stockton Riverside College (SRC) Bede Sixth Form in County Durham collected gold, silver and bronze medals in the British Biology and Chemistry Olympiads.

The national competitions, run by the Society of Biology and the Royal Society of Chemistry, are open to students studying post-16 sciences

James Fryatt won gold in biology and silver in chemistry; Ben Ryan won silver for

chemistry and was commended for biology; Jessica Holmes got bronze for chemistry; Helen Robertson got bronze for biology and Hannah Holmes was highly commended for biology.

Dr Richard Spencer, head of biology at SRC Bede Sixth Form, said: "We've known for a long time that our science students are up there with the best in the UK. Now we've proved it."



TV presenter Nick Baker (centre) with South Devon College students

College hosts animal conference

Former Really Wild Show presenter Nick Baker was the guest speaker at a Devon college's animal and environment conference.

Mr Baker, who has also hosted *Spring Watch* and *Weird Creatures*, was at South Devon College's University Centre for the event early this month that covered topics including animal health, ecology, marine conservation and sustainability.

It involved academic staff from Plymouth University and all the college's foundation degree animal science students.

Lucy Foster, who is in her second year of a

foundation degree in animal science, said: "It was so nice to be in a room full of people who care about animals and the natural world as much as I do."

Samantha Law, programme manager and lecturer in animal science, said: "It was fantastic to see our degree students engage in this event. It gave them a valuable opportunity to expand their academic skills."

"There was a real variety of projects and the audience asked some challenging questions. Everybody was inspired by Nick's fun and informative lecture."

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From left: Ian McMillan with Emma Carlyle, Jade Fisher and Laura Mason

Thumbs up from the Barnsley Bard

Ian McMillan, the Barnsley Bard, popped into a Yorkshire College to speak at an event organised by students. The poet, playwright and broadcaster entertained around 60 people at Doncaster College with anecdotes and readings.

The event was organised by English BA students Emma Carlyle, Jade Fisher, Laura Mason and David Powney as part of an academic professional development course.

“We have worked on it all year and we hope we have pulled the task off successfully,” Emma said.

Free books by six different authors were handed out and stands run by the Dyslexia Support Group and Reading for children gave out information.

Ian McMillan said: “It was one of the best organised events that I’ve attended.”

Success on a (bronze) plate



Frying pan fortunes: Winning catering students Freddie Davis and Abbie Coggins

More than 700 budding Gordon Ramsays from colleges and hotels across the UK competed at Wessex Salon Culinaire 2013 last month.

Among the winners at the event, hosted by Hampshire’s Brockenhurst College, was Richmond upon Thames College level two student Freddie Davis, 17, from Roehampton.

He won a bronze medal, while part-time level two student Ruby Vince, 25, from Teddington, received a certificate of merit.

Hampton 17-year-old Abbie Coggins, a VRQ level one student, also got a certificate of merit.

A college spokesperson said: “She produced two portions of roasted red pepper and Mediterranean vegetable soup with goat’s cheese quenelle plus two portions of smoked chicken and porcini broth.

“Over the years, the Wessex Salon Culinaire has become a prolific platform for student chefs wanting competition experience on a high profile stage.”

Tall orders for trainee chefs

Trainee chefs from Barking & Dagenham College cooked for 450 people, including their mayor and mayor-elect, during a ‘mayor-making’ weekend.

The 15 students served a hot and cold buffet for 150 guests at a ceremonial council meeting, where current Barking and Dagenham Mayor Anthony Ramsay, handed over to Councillor Hardial Singh Rai.

They also prepared a buffet for 350 people attending a parade through the town square to St Margaret’s Church where a special blessing for the new Mayor was held.

Barking & Dagenham food studies curriculum manager Adrian Crabb said: “The students do an incredible job and really enjoy being part of such prestigious events.

“Catering for so many guests can be tough but the whole team has been working really hard.”



Kyle Snow, 19, from Barking, who is studying for a Diploma in Professional Cookery, Level two



From left: Fujitsu apprentices Kirk Hay, Stephanie Palmer, 22 and Manisha Mistry, 19

What a difference a day makes

Apprentices from Fujitsu celebrated National Learning at Work Day at an evening reception in London attended by Skills Minister Matthew Hancock.

The day encourages employers to provide workplace training for their employees, including one-off taster sessions.

Apprentice Kirk Hay, 22, said: “Learning and working at the same time has been very good, just because of the career development opportunities and the support we get from our

trainers, colleagues and the other apprentices.”

Research by Pearson, which held the reception as part of Adult Learners’ Week, found 23 per cent of people who took part in the day were doing accredited training six months later.

Mr Hancock said: “Learning on the job and learning the job at the same time is such a positive way to increase your lifetime earnings, to gain experience and to increase the skills of the nation.”



Management Information Systems Manager

£40,163 per annum (full time – 36 hours per week)

The Management Information Systems Manager will have the drive and creativity to develop and implement a comprehensive review of management information within the College. They will manage their team to provide accurate and accessible information to support College managers in order to drive quality, maximize potential funding, and maintain high standards.

To find more information on the college itself, view the job description and person specification and to apply online please go to www.northern.ac.uk. To receive a postal application form please contact the Personnel department on **01226 776000**.

Application forms must be submitted by **10am on Monday 10 June**. Interviews to be held on **Thursday 4 July**.

The Northern College is committed to safeguarding and promotes the welfare of all learners and expects all staff to share this commitment.

We are an equal opportunities employer, applications are particularly welcome from disabled, black and minority ethnic groups as they are currently under represented within our staff.

Registered Charity Number 507245



WE'RE HIRING

Dv8 training is a well-established and expanding training provider rated **"good with outstanding features"** by Ofsted. We have over 300 young people going through our vocational programmes per year and they all take qualifications in maths, English and ICT. We are looking for people to join our dedicated functional skills team based in Walthamstow, East London. The Dv8 model of functional skills delivery has been recognised by Ofsted as an example of national best practice. Dv8 training is an equal opportunities employer and we are committed to safeguarding all learners enrolled on our programmes.

**Functional skills
english tutor**

Full time

**Functional skills
maths tutor**

Full time

**Functional skills
support tutor**

Part time (2 days a week)

**Go to www.dv8training.com/jobs/
to find out more and apply**



**Myerscough
College**

Billsborrow, Preston. Lancashire PR3 0RY

Vice Principal (and Deputy Chief Executive)

**Salary circa £75k-£85k
plus relocation package and benefits**

Further details about the role are available on the College website or, for an informal discussion about the post, please contact Ann Turner, Chief Executive & Principal on 01995 642201 or email aturner@myerscough.ac.uk.

Closing date for applications Monday 10 June 2013 with interviews to be held in the College on 24 & 25 June 2013.

We are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of young people and expect all staff to share this commitment. This post is subject to an enhanced DBS check.

Are you innovative, inspiring with high expectations?

Myerscough is a thriving specialist further and higher education college, situated near Preston in Lancashire with centres across the North West of England and a turnover of £27m. Specialising in land based and sports provision with national recruitment, Myerscough is ambitious for its learners with an overarching mission of Providing Opportunities for All to Succeed.

Further Education learner numbers exceed 2,500 with over 1,200 apprentices nationwide. FE results have improved significantly in the last three years to be the leading specialist college in the country (2011/12) and within the top 5% of all colleges nationally, alongside national success in the sporting arena. The College is an Associate School of UCLan with extensive research activity underpinning provision for 1,300 HE learners.

We are now seeking an enthusiastic Vice Principal who will be responsible for shaping the development and future direction of the curriculum for Further & Higher Education and our work based delivery.

The successful candidate will be passionate about teaching, learning and the student experience with the necessary skills and imagination to lead the innovative development of the curriculum and deliver an outstanding student experience. The VP will be results driven with the leadership and management experience to influence internal and external stakeholders and motivate and inspire staff. This is a fantastic opportunity for an experienced and inspirational leader with a strong educational background to join a forward looking, dynamic senior leadership team and help deliver the ambitious strategic plan.



www.myerscough.ac.uk



To apply for the advertised position, or find details of any other vacancies, please go to www.dearne-coll.ac.uk

Quality Manager - Subcontracted Provision

Ref: HR60. £35,494 per annum.
37 hours per week.

To ensure the quality and continuous improvement of subcontracted provision.

All posts are subjected to an Enhanced DBS Disclosure.
Closing date for applications:
Thursday 6th June 2013.

www.dearne-coll.ac.uk



HEAD OF BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT – ABC AWARDS

SALARY: £45,000 - £48,000 PA (according to ability and experience)

An exciting opportunity has arisen for a highly motivated Head of Business Development to lead the Business Development team and to promote the reputation and drive growth of ABC qualifications nationally through training providers.

You will have a track record of successful business development and extensive experience of dealing with a wide range of business development activity within an Awarding Body or other relevant Further Education institution or organisation.

With a strong customer focus, you'll have previously developed and maintained positive and productive customer

relationships. Confidence and personality are important and you must be target driven with the desire to create opportunities and maximise growth.

Closing date: 1700 on Wednesday 19 June 2013

**Interviews: Wednesday 26 June 2013 at
Robins Wood House, Robins Wood Road,
Aspley, Nottingham,
NG8 3NH.**

For further details please visit www.emfec.co.uk or www.abcawards.co.uk or contact Tracy Roser on **0115 8541628** or tracyr@emfec.co.uk

We do not accept CVs or late applications.
No agencies please.



Providing Education
for 800 Years



ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL

£ Competitive

Ludlow College is a small sixth form college situated in the centre of the medieval town in the Marches of South Shropshire. The College is merging to form Herefordshire and Ludlow College, hence the creation of this new post to provide senior leadership at Ludlow College.

As Assistant Principal, a full member of the senior team, your focus will be on the delivery of excellence in teaching, learning and assessment, whilst maintaining financial efficiency. Being closely involved in strategic College leadership, you will be given outstanding opportunities to develop your career.

A very attractive salary is available for an exceptional candidate.



You will have:

- A track record of excellent leadership in the delivery of A levels
- Passion to achieve the very best for every single learner
- The determination and skills to achieve outstanding provision.

For an informal discussion about this opportunity, please contact Ian Peake, Principal, on 01432 365300.

Application forms and details can be obtained from www.hct.ac.uk email personnel@hct.ac.uk or telephone (01432) 365374.

Closing date: 13 June 2013

Selection dates: 24 and 25 June 2013

start here
go anywhere

KNOWSLEY COMMUNITY COLLEGE
MERSEYSIDE

FROM
INADEQUATE
TO
GOOD.
TRANSFORMED.



Director of Learner Experience	£50,653 - £55,348
Head of Quality	£40,004 - £43,703
Quality Improvement Manager	£36,617 - £38,845
Deputy Head of MIS	£33,511-£35,548
Student Services Manager (Performance and Progression)	£26,473 - £29,785
WorkWorld Manager	£26,473 - £29,785
Web Applications Developer	£23,541 - £28,922
Junior Data Analyst	£17,184 - £18,154

An opportunity to join the most rapidly improving college in England which has moved from Inadequate to Good in 14 months through transformational leadership.

Join us on our journey to Outstanding.

For more information or an application pack for any of the vacancies, telephone 0151 477 5736 or log on to www.knowsleycollege.ac.uk to download an application form and further details. Alternatively email your details to jobs@knowsleycollege.ac.uk



Introducing apt awards

the new trading name for Open College Network South West Region (OCNSWR)

Apt awards is an independent national Awarding Organisation, regulated by Ofqual to develop and offer national qualifications on the Qualifications and Credit Framework, and licensed by the QAA to award the Access to Higher Education Diploma.

Apt awards works with a wide range of national and local organisations, including FE colleges, adult and community education centres, schools, and employers.

The apt awards qualification and accreditation service includes:



Plymouth Office
15 Research Way, Tamar Science
Park, Plymouth PL6 8BT
Call 01752 831500

info@aptawards.org.uk

Cheltenham Office
122 Bath Road, Cheltenham,
Gloucestershire, GL53 7JX
Call 01242 225511

www.aptaawards.org.uk

Apt awards is the new
trading name for Open
College Network South
West Region (OCNSWR)

@aptaawards



Apt awards is proud to be a certified social enterprise with the Social Enterprise Mark, recognising our commitment to reinvesting profits to benefit our learners and the wider community.

FE Week Sudoku challenge

		5			6		
		4		9			8
				6	7		3
		2	3			5	
7			1		8		2
	5				7	1	
3		7	9				
2				8		3	
		6			2		

Difficulty:
EASY

How to play: Fill in all blank squares making sure that each row, column and 3 by 3 box contains the numbers 1 to 9

Solutions: Next week

9					1		6
		5		6	2	1	
	1						7
7	2						
	6			8			2
						4	7
	4						8
		6	4	3		9	
2			8				3

Difficulty:
MEDIUM

Last Week's solutions

6	4	9	1	2	7	3	8	5
3	2	8	5	4	9	6	7	1
5	7	1	6	3	8	2	9	4
2	3	6	9	8	1	5	4	7
1	8	5	3	7	4	9	6	2
4	9	7	2	5	6	8	1	3
7	6	3	8	1	5	4	2	9
8	1	2	4	9	3	7	5	6
9	5	4	7	6	2	1	3	8

Difficulty:
EASY

6	7	5	9	2	4	8	1	3
3	4	9	6	8	1	7	5	2
8	2	1	5	3	7	6	9	4
7	1	3	8	4	6	9	2	5
9	5	8	1	7	2	3	4	6
4	6	2	3	9	5	1	7	8
2	3	4	7	1	8	5	6	9
1	8	6	2	5	9	4	3	7
5	9	7	4	6	3	2	8	1

Difficulty:
MEDIUM

FE Week mini-mascot

Follow the adventures of *FE Week's* biggest and smallest fan!



"Mostly this week I've been spending rainy days in the kitchen"

You can also follow our *FE Week* mini-mascot on Twitter @daniellinford